

# A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO THE RAINY CITY

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It's the end of the world.

It always rains. Rain beats against the walls. It seeps through the shutters. It pours off the mossy backs of the gargoyles. It turns streets into streams and rivers.

Teetering, damp towers lean against rotting townhouses thrown together in the ruins of a once gleaming city. Servants dash through storms on petty errands. Fireplaces sputter weakly, and spellbooks filled with moldy spells rot in spite of the protections lavished on them for their precious contents.

The grand academy of magic used to be here. But that was before the world ended and the rains came. Now the grand academy is mostly under the murky channel that divides Old Town from the Mids, its secrets ruined and lore lost. A few of the highest towers peak out of the still dark waters of the murk, testifying to its presence. Ferryman use the towers as moorings and wayposts when the rain and fog make navigating the bay treacherous. The school is a remnant of a past world.

But there is magic here. Wizards hide themselves away in their damp townhouses and cliff top towers, each one jealously guarding the few secrets they still have, scrounging and scheming for more. The richest people live on Embassy Row amidst the peaks, where the rains pour down the stepped streets in waterfalls. The poorest live in the Sump, a low lying slum that is as much a swamp as it is a neighborhood of rotting stilt huts. Alchemists lead the guilds that rule over Old Town. The desperate, striving tradesfolk and merchants build their townhouses in rings that cling to the lower slopes of the peaks. Refugees from strange foreign worlds wash up in Vagabond Bay, their worlds passed, the city their final haven.

Rainwater pours off the backs and from the mouths of the gargoyles that decorate the stone towers and keeps. They plot too. Some say they plot to destroy the city, but wizards sometimes hire them to keep watch over their petty secrets anyway. Most find that rough men are security enough. Violence comes easily to them, and they care little for sorceries. But thieves can make a fortune here, if they are quick and clever. From the lowliest medium to the greatest wizard, the mages hire experts to steal spells and enchanted items from their enemies. And from their friends.

It's the end of the world. It always rains. Your fate is in the hands of wizards, alchemists, and thieves.

But it doesn't have to stay that way...





The Rainy City, looking north from Pondheim in the Sump



Your port of arrival, with its piers and docks, ships and warehouses, sailors, bullies, and refugees. Barnacle encrusted shacks, narrow alleys, ramshackle causeways and piers, rotting wood, and the spray of salt and brine everywhere.

Poorly built to begin with, and built altogether too high, three to five story shanties lean against each other for support. Rowboats and barges, sloops and doggers, and Admiralty ships of the line crowded into creaky piers from Brining Lane to the Fingers, portside, and from the Fingers to Fishmarket starboard. Warehouses and pubs along Bully Alley and Brining Lane. Butchers of Clean Street. Refugees from a thousand worlds land here first.

Welcome to the Rainy City!

## WEATHER

Ever gustier and blusterier than the rest of the city, prone to squalls, with strong tides and unsteady waves. The waves of the inner swells draw ships inexorably toward this bay.

## INTERACT WITH

Local humans, gulls, deepsies, mermaids, octopuses, larvae, as well as beings of all sorts recently arrived from flooded worlds.

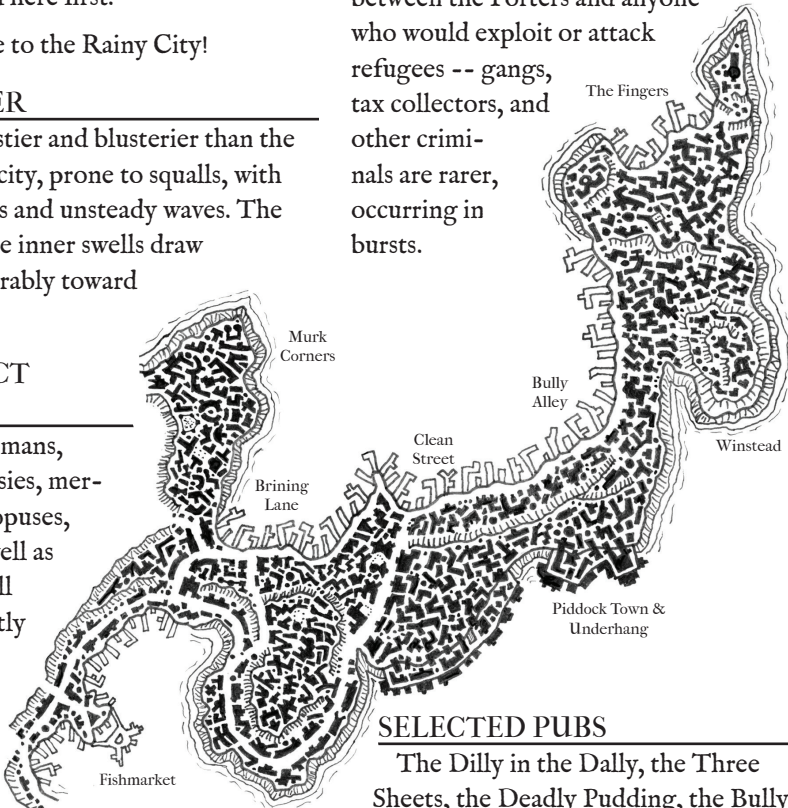
Find work as a fishmonger, fisherman, bully (longshoreman), sailor, admiralty seaman, auctioneer, druggist, costermonger, mudlark, smuggler, pirate, shipwright, warehouseman, wormer, pudding man, or tax collector.

## LAW AND ORDER

The Admiralty keeps order in its way -- the order of the sea, doling out whippings and beatings as needed to establish peace. The gangs maintain their own order in their neighborhoods. Where they can, the Port Association fights to protect refugees in need.

## DISORDER AND DISARRAY

Clashes between Admiralty seamen and the gangs are common. Clashes between the Porters and anyone who would exploit or attack refugees -- gangs, tax collectors, and other criminals are rarer, occurring in bursts.



## SELECTED PUBS

The Dilly in the Dally, the Three Sheets, the Deadly Pudding, the Bully

Pulpit, Widdershins, the Drink, the Dive, Piddock Pub, the Long Lamprey, Winstead Creaky Shack.

### ADMIRALTY HOUSE, THE FINGERS

Private club for members of the Admiralty. Only recognized naval officers may enter the upper floors, and only commanders and above may enter the Council Chambers. The club bar has the largest collection of otherworldly brandies, gins, rums, and whiskeys in any one place in the city, saved and protected by naval men while escaping their own doomed worlds.

### BRINING LANE & BULLY ALLEY

The busiest portside lanes, for city-wide trade and refugee arrivals.

### CLEAN STREET

Many ships arrive with livestock or food animals, and many are sold for immediate butchery on Clean Street, in exchange for local silver. The runoff from the butcher's shops runs into the bay, darkening the waters and attracting sharks and the opprobriation of mermaids.

Vellum makers and some bookbinders can be found on Clean Street as well. Hove's Bindings, the bookbinding shop of Verily Hove, Witch of Clean Street, can be found here. Dark rumors swirl around Ma Hove, who has been seen more than once near a wizard who disappeared forever.

### FISHMARKET

This sprawling fishmarket extends on wharves over part of the bay. The bell rings daily at 5 am, signalling the start

of the trading day. Fishermen, carriers, brokers, and fishmongers enter first. By 7 am, bummarees begin selling to the costermongers, and by 9 am the busiest part of the day has past. Every year, on the ninth day of the Rainy Season, Fishmarket is host to a massive festival -- "the Gentle Exchange of the Fish."

### MURK CORNERS

This neighborhood adjoins the place where the bay ends and the Murk begins. The fogs of the Murk roll into this neighborhood unpredictably, staying sometimes for hours, sometimes for days. Ghosts come with them. The locals leave fruit and spirits on small shrines in the hopes of appeasing them.

### PIDDOCK TOWN

Spilling over the edge of the cliff on wooden scaffolds and supports, Piddock Town extends from "mainland" Vagabond Bay into the waters of the boat people who live below the overhanging cliff on their boats.

### SEVEN BULLY ALLEY

A sprawling three to six story wooden tenement covering multiple blocks of Vagabond Bay along the Alley, teeming with an unknown number of people. It serves as home to many newly arrived refugees, containing entire enclaves from some lost lands.

Its residents also include longshoremen and their families, mudlarks and theirs, many old gulls (too old to fly). The basement houses deepsy families (a common enough fact, as basements regularly flood). No one owns it, and no one controls it.



## ORGANIZATIONS

*The Admiralty* is a club where all old navy hands can gather, in a richly appointed (if a bit salt-crusted) pub and lighthouse in the Fingers, at the tip of Vagabond Bay. Only seamen from legitimate navies may enter, and they must prove their provenance through tests from known members.

The organization also fronts the Rainy City's unofficial Navy, led by the self-appointed "Council of Admirals." The Admiralty patrols the waters around the city to keep riffraff, pirates, and enemies of the city at bay.

They are led by the Admiral of the Fleet, Alpha Admiral Herrinck Barnswallow and Admiral Chanticleer Wigg.

*The Noble Association of Fishmongers and Fishermen* controls Fishmarket and its tributaries. This most gentlemanly of associations provides the city with much of its food. It is led by Sir Aberdaire Alderman, Earl of Fishmarket Way, and his governing council: the Peers of Vagabond Bay.

It is only fitting that the association hosts the greatest annual festival in the city, on the ninth day of the Rainy Season, "The Gentle Exchange of the Fish," a three day event centered in Fishmarket with public hangings, bracing auctions, a cattlefish show,

crab fights, seaweed spas, flying fish races, lanternfish brightness show, and the annual fisherman games (featuring competitions in knot tying, sail raising, net throwing, bailing out a sinking boat, and anchor raising). Plus all the fresh fish you can eat!

It is said that more money passes through Fishmarket's vault, "the Locker," in those three days than any other vault in the city the entire year.

*The Port Association for the Beneficial Incorporation of Refugees and Asylum Seekers* ("the

Porters") is a charitable organization that works to clothe, feed, and support refugees in finding a place in the city

Its founder was an influential member of the Union of Bullies, the city's union of longshoremen and stevedores, and many bullies are counted among its membership.



Sir Aberdaire Alderman

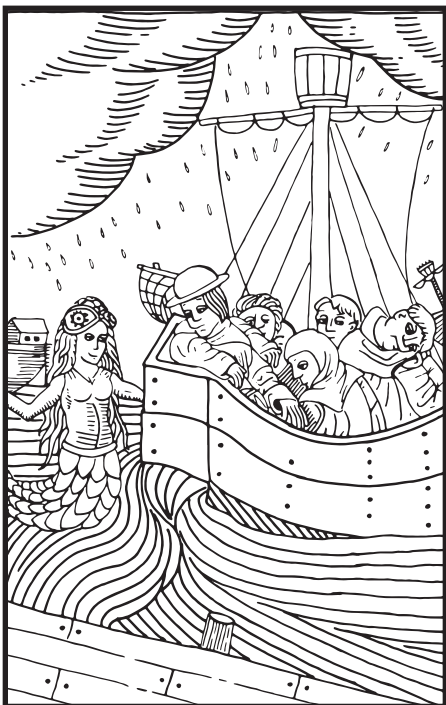
The Porters work out of 9-18 Bully Alley, a sprawling cluster of shacks and warehouses one street back from the harbor, where they provide rooms, soup, fish and other aid to new arrivals in need.

While focused on providing charitable aid to the needy, the Porters are not averse to violence and have intermittent clashes with tax collectors, seamen of the Admiralty, and members of the Vagabond Bay Boys and Sons of Arne.

## ADVENTURES

•You have been wronged. Perhaps your application for membership in the Honorable Association of Fishmongers and Fishermen has been denied because you are “not a fisherman or fishmonger,” because you are the wrong kind of fisherman or fishmonger (Sump fishers and pirates need not apply), or because you are such a damn good fisherman that the Peers don’t want to be compared to you. Maybe you are a standing member of the Association, but one of the Peers of Fishmarket Way has insulted your boat.

Whatever the reason, you have been wronged, and you will have your revenge. No one has ever robbed the Locker during the Gentle Exchange of the Fish, they say. Well, no one has ever been as motivated as you.



•Smuggle rice and other goods from the city from the bay to the pirate haven of Rickety in the Swells. Evade the Admiralty’s blockade, slipping through by night. Play a game of cat and mouse with the admiralty using the small, evanescent islands that pop up in the night and disappear the next day in the seas between here and Rickety.

Sneak your goods onto an Admiralty ship, waiting to move them to a pirate sloop during the chaos of a boarding action in one of the countless border engagements between the Admiralty and the pirates. Or circumvent the blockade entirely, dropping sail and rowing through the doldrums of the Bobber Sea among the wrecks of lost ships and their feral inhabitants, coming back to Rickety from the other side.

•Join the Porters! Run interference between refugees and tax collectors and other scam artists. Fight the Sons of Arne and the Vagabond Bay boys in the streets to protect the innocent or at least the naive. Stop the Admiralty from pressing newcomers into their damned navy.

Send agents throughout the city to find work and shelter for new arrivals and protect them from the depredations of the worst gangs, cults, and guilds. Give food to the hungry. Punch slavers, slum lords, and manufacturers in the face.

## NPC NAMES

Gunnar Carnifex, Brackley the Pacific, Elenia the Smuggler, Fewster Screeb, Geraldine Crank, Lhav Littlelips, Zella Trude, Baltic Gray, Vetus Er